

April 27, 1968

MEMORANDUM

TO: J. Lee Rankin

FROM: Herman Sadleir

The purpose of this memorandum is to explain the reasons why certain members of the staff feel that it is important to take certain on-site photographs in connection with the location of the approximate points at which the three bullets struck the occupants of the Presidential limousine.

Our report presumably will state that the President was hit by the first bullet, Governor Connally by the second, and the President by the third and fatal bullet. The report will also conclude that the bullets were fired by one person located in the sixth floor southeast corner window of the Park Building.

In our investigation now under way, however, we have not shown that these events could possibly have occurred in the manner suggested above. All we have is a reasonable hypothesis which appears to be supported by the medical testimony but which has not been checked out against the physical facts at the scene of the assassination.

Our examination of the Kaphaler film shows that the film did not strike the President at a point which would be with reasonable accuracy on the ground. We have also seen the exact film (no. 313) in the original film which shows the President and we have also seen the film which shows the lining up of fixed objects in the Park Building which we feel that we have located the approximate location of this spot. This is supported by a photo of the same spot from the point of view of the camera was standing.

We have the testimony of Mrs. Rankin and Mrs. Connally that the President was hit with the second bullet at a point which is approximately correct with precision. We feel we are justified, however, with the help of medical testimony, in the fact which hit the Governor did not even after frame 313 of the Kaphaler film. The Governor feels that it was frame 313, which is certainly consistent with our observations of the film and with the doctor's testimony. Since the President was shot at frame 313, this would leave a time of approximately 1/100th of a second between the two shots, certainly ample time for an experienced marksman.

Prior to our last viewing of the film with Governor Connally we had agreed that the President was hit while he was concealed behind the sign which covers between frames 217 to 225. We have expert testimony to the effect that a skilled marksman would require a minimum time of 2 1/2 seconds between shots with this rifle. Since the camera operation at 18 2/3 frames per second, there would have to be a minimum of 10 frames between shots. It is apparent, therefore, that if Governor Connally was hit while he was in frame 217, the President would have to have been hit no later than frame 227 and probably even earlier.

We have not yet examined the assassination scene to determine whether the assassin is that could have shot the President prior to frame 227. We could locate the position on the ground which corresponds to this frame and it would then be our intent to establish by photography that the assassin could have fired the first shot at the President prior to this point. Our intention is not to establish the point with complete accuracy, but merely to substantiate the hypothesis which underlies the conclusion that Oswald was the sole assassin.

I had always assumed that our final report would be accompanied by a composite diagram which would indicate the approximate location of the three shots. We certainly cannot prepare such a diagram without establishing that we are dealing on occurrence which is physically possible. Our failure to do this will, in my opinion, place this report in jeopardy since it is a certainty that others will examine the Kennedy film and raise the same questions which have been raised by our examination of the film. If we do not attempt to answer these questions with observable facts, others will remain with me a which challenge our work. We are, therefore, in a most fearful position based on our inability to answer the questions by the investigatory community.

I should add that the facts which we now have in our possession, submitted to us in separate reports from the Dallas Secret Service, are totally incorrect and, if left uncorrected, will present a completely misleading picture.

It may well be that this project should be undertaken by the FBI and Secret Service with our assistance instead of being done as a private project. The important thing is that the project be undertaken expeditiously.